By what track can you allure One who is enlightened? Trackless indeed is He. His victory nought can undo. None of this world can touch that victory. He is a Seer of limitless range.
—*The Dhammapada*

THEOSOPHY

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THE LIMIT OF THE KNOWABLE

TOWARD the end of the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine,* in the section "Gods, Monads, and Atoms," Madame Blavatsky makes this statement:

> Draw a deep line in your thought between that ever-incognizable essence, and the, as invisible, yet comprehensible Presence (*Mulaprakriti*), or Schekinah, from *beyond and through which* vibrates the sound of the *Verbum,* and from which evolve the numberless hierarchies of intelligent *Egos,* of conscious as of semi-conscious, *perceptive* and *apperceptive* Beings, whose essence is spiritual Force, whose Substance is the Elements and whose Bodies (when needed) are the *atoms*—and our doctrine is there. (I, 629.)

The importance of this line can hardly be over-emphasized, since it divides what can ultimately be known from what must remain forever unknowable. A little earlier, H.P.B. put the same distinction in other words:

> "There is but one unknown—*the ultimate substratum of Spirit* (Space). That which is not the *Absolute* and the *One* is, in virtue of that very differentiation, however far removed from the physical senses, always accessible to the spiritual human mind, which is a coruscation of the undifferentiable Integral." (I, 581 fn.)

It is not too much to say that all the self-deceptions to which man is subject, all the misconceptions concerning the nature of self, deity, the world, and all the antagonisms and confusions which afflict mankind, arise from the difficulty which attends the making

of this distinction between the knowable and the Unknowable. Man is himself both. The ground of his being is the undefinable reality underlying all, yet the fact that he is a "being" results from those limitations of form and matter which make him knowable to himself, and able to reflect upon this paradox—that "he" is *both* the limitless and finite, *both* spirit and matter. "In the Sankhya philosophy," we are told (*S.D.*I, 247), "Purusha (spirit) is spoken of as something impotent unless he mounts on the shoulders of Prakriti (matter), which, left alone, is—senseless."

The sole and primary units of all existence are known as monads, and monadic evolution is spoken of in the philosophy. But the monad requires a vehicle or instrument of matter, in order that its potentialities may unfold, and so that the matter itself may be refined and raised to a higher or more spiritual condition. Speaking of the preparatory stages of evolutionary development, H.P.B. says (I, 246-47):

> After a sevenfold gyration encased in the stone (or that which will become mineral and stone in the Fourth Round), it [the Monad] creeps out of it, say, as a lichen. Passing thence, through all the forms of vegetable matter, into what is termed animal matter, it has now reached the point where it has become the germ, so to speak, of the animal, that will become the physical man. All this, up to the Third Round, is formless, as matter, and senseless, as consciousness.

Now follows a crucial statement:

> For the Monad or Jiva *per se* cannot be even called spirit: it is a ray, a breath of the ABSOLUTE, or the Absoluteness rather, and the Absolute Homogeneity, having no relations with the conditioned and relative finiteness, is unconscious on our plane.

The Monad can become conscious only through those middle principles which are to be supplied by the two classes of ancestors known as the Lunar Pitris and the Manasa Putra.

In another place, H.P.B. stresses the difference between that which evolves or grows into the appropriate vehicle for conscious man, and its spiritual occupant:

> Metaphysically speaking, it is of course an absurdity to talk of the "development" of a Monad, or to say that *it* becomes "Man." But any attempt to preserve metaphysical accuracy of language in the use of such a tongue as the English would necessitate at least three extra volumes of this work, and would entail an amount of verbal repetition which would be wearisome in

> the extreme. It stands to reason that a MONAD cannot either progress or develop, or even be affected by the changes of states it passes through. *It is not of this world or plane,* and may be compared only to an indestructible star of divine light and fire, thrown down on to our Earth as a plank of salvation for the personalities in which it indwells. It is for the latter to cling to it; and thus partaking of its divine nature, obtain immortality. Left to itself the Monad will cling to no one; but, like the "plank," be drifted away to another incarnation by the unresting current of evolution. (I, 174-75 fn.)

From reflection on such statements as this, we begin to see the difficulty in answering questions such as "Who or What is the 'real' man?" The reply must turn on how "man" is conceived. A brief paragraph in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (p. 728) presents the teaching on this question:

> Man is certainly *no* special creation, and he is the product of Nature's gradual perfective work, like any other living unit on this Earth. But this is only with regard to the human tabernacle. That which lives and thinks in man and survives that frame, the masterpiece of evolution—is the "Eternal Pilgrim," the Protean differentiation in space and time of the One Absolute "unknowable."

One might answer the question, then, by saying that the true man is indeed that "Protean differentiation," since there would be nothing of what we associate with the wonder and greatness of human achievement without that indwelling ray of the Unknowable One. But there is also the consideration of the heroic struggle and immeasurable sacrifice performed by the evolving intelligence, called the "masterpiece of evolution," and this Promethean conception has as much claim to being the true idea of man as any other. So it seems equally just to say, also, that the true man "is *Manas,* the Mind-man or embodied Consciousness," this being the definition given by H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 100), and repeated by Mr. Judge in the seventh chapter of *The Ocean of Theosophy.*

We are driven to the conclusion that the puzzle and contradiction concerning the nature of man does not lie in that nature itself, but in the tacit assumption by the questioner that the inquiry can be answered in terms of a single polarity—that man must be either the changeless or the changing, and not both. Yet he *is* both, for in him are found all the aspects of reality, and to leave out either pole would be to render the subject of man's nature wholly incomprehensible.

Thought along these lines comes close to the very garment-hem of cause, beyond which, as we know, "all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception." Early in *The Secret Doctrine* (p. 44-45) Madame Blavatsky speaks of the blank condition reached by the mind in the attempt to trace back the chain of causes and effects. She adds, however, that "both science and religion jump to this condition of blankness much more quickly than is necessary; for they ignore the metaphysical abstractions which are the only conceivable cause of physical concretions." This being the case, it is desirable to press the mind to its limit of understanding, and thought about the nature of man is a means for exhausting its possibilities.

What sort of self-understanding, then, is ultimately possible for human beings? One key to the answer to this question is found in the word "Anupadaka," meaning "parentless." The highest beings in the universe are called Anupadaka, and these, it is said (*S.D.* I, 52), include the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, "once that their whole personality is merged in their compound sixth and seventh principles—or Atma-Buddhi, and that they have become the 'diamond-souled' (Vajra-sattvas), the full Mahatmas." This seems to say that once the *evolving* ego is wholly merged with the unevolved and changeless aspect of the being—the eternal Ray—that being becomes self-existent and therefore "parentless." H.P.B. adds that "even every Soul-endowed man is an Anupadaka in a latent state."

It is as though, through identification with that which eternally *Is,* the finite is absorbed in the Infinite.

Certain conclusions become manifest. Most evident is the importance of first principles, and the clarification of thought through the metaphysical ideas on which the entire philosophy of Theosophy is founded. Throughout all and even the simplest of Theosophical works is found the idea of the potential divinity of every soul, the capacity of each one to rise to the greatest heights through his own self-reliant effort and struggles. The aspirant, however humble, is urged to seek for wisdom within himself. At the same time, there is the teaching of non-separateness. The brotherhood of all life is the foundation of all growth. Knowledge comes to those who see themselves in others, and others in themselves. Thus Altruism is the key to understanding. The Buddhas of Compassion are beings whose knowledge flows from the entire organism of existence,

which they have made their own. In this way the most recondite philosophy is reflected in the simplest moral teachings of the Sages who walk among men.

Yet it must have been possible, in our age and generation, for men to comprehend the metaphysical abstractions which lie behind the moral injunctions and symbolic representations of truth that were given to mankind in former ages. This seems the only possible explanation for the depth and profundity of *The Secret Doctrine,* in which H. P. Blavatsky drew together so many lines of religious and allegorical teaching of the past, rendering them into the philosophical conceptions now studied by Theosophists in all parts of the world.

The Universal Instructor

Practical Theosophy is not *one* Science, but embraces every science in life, moral and physical. It may, in short, be justly regarded as the universal "coach," a tutor of world-wide knowledge and experience, and of an erudition which not only assists and guides his pupils toward a successful examination for every scientific or moral service in earthly life, but fits them for *the lives* to come, if those pupils will only study the universe and its mysteries *within themselves,* instead of studying them through the spectacles of orthodox science and religions.

And let no reader misunderstand these statements. It is Theosophy *per se,* not any individual member of the Society or even Theosophist, on whose behalf such a universal omniscience is claimed. The two—Theosophy and the Theosophical Society—as a vessel and the *olla podrida* it contains, must not be confounded. One is, as an ideal, *divine* Wisdom, perfection itself; the other a poor, imperfect thing, trying to run *under,* if not *within,* its shadow on Earth.

—H. P. Blavatsky

FROM "THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM"

[This is another series of selections from the *Forum,* a monthly issued by the Theosophical Society in America, consisting of questions contributed by readers and answers by members of an editorial board which included Mr. Judge. It began publication in April, 1889. The numbering of the questions as in the *Forum* has been dropped since the original sequence has not been retained. Only answers by Mr. Judge have been selected. —Eds. THEOSOPHY]

METAPHYSICS AND THE "PRINCIPLES"

What is meant in the Proem of Secret Doctrine (Vol. I, page 14,) by the term "bare subjectivity" as contrasted with "Unconditioned Consciousness," for the latter would seem to be "bare subjectivity" itself? It is entirely comprehensible how the Absolute "Be-ness" may be symbolised, on the one hand, by abstract Space, and, on the other, by abstract Motion, but not so readily perceived how Space may be defined as "bare subjectivity" when Motion is contrasted with it as the pure noumenon of Thought.

W.Q.J.—In the *proem* cited the author distinctly says under (*a*) that "speculation is impossible" about the omnipresent Principle, and then to give one way of symbolizing it—which is certainly not definition—proceeds to state that that Infinite Principle is the same as the "unconscious" and "unknowable" of European philosophy, in which, indeed, the FORUM editor takes delight. She then says it is symbolized in the *Secret Doctrine* as absolute abstract space, which one must conceive of as *space* distinct from all things existing therein; we cannot exclude this, nor at the same time really conceive of it. And in the same way, when we come to regard this omnipresent Principle from the point of view of the root of consciousness, we postulate it as being—in this aspect—*absolute abstract motion,* because consciousness has the quality of motion in it and not the quality of space, since motion has to have space in

which to move. So then, having thus vaguely symbolized space, which is not consciousness, we have to say that, on the other hand, considering it as apart from consciousness, it may be said to be "bare subjectivity," although we have to use our consciousness in order to deal with it at all. The editor's question, "Can any one conceive of abstract color?" seems peculiar, since it is not foreign to all the schools of Western thought, where many assert—as, indeed, it would appear they must—that apart from any particular motion or color we can conceive of motion and color in the abstract apart from particularization.

Is the seventh principle, the Atma, ever incarnated, or are our bodies simply projections of that principle and formed by it, as was the statue Galatæa by Pygmalion? From some Theosophical books I gather that the seven principles are all incarnated from the beginning, and that each principle is evolved in turn. From others it would seem that the higher principles are never incarnated.

W.Q.J.—The fiction of the formation of Galatæa by Pygmalion is such a faint and inadequate symbol or illustration that there is nothing to be gained by its use, as it will surely mislead. The evolution of the bodily form came about in the same way as that of all other forms; as said in the *Bhagavad-Gita,* "All is due to the mystic power of self-ideation, the eternal thought in the eternal mind," and only in the sense that all forms are projections from the eternal can we say that "our bodies are projections of that principle" (Atma). The second sentence of the question shows that here is another case in which the very materialistic view of the sevenfold constitution of man given in *Esoteric Buddhism* and used by so many thereafter has resulted in inducing the notion that there is a separation between the so-called "principles." This idea of seven distinct things, entities, or principles in man ought to be abandoned, and is due almost wholly to erroneous nomenclature, as was strongly urged in several papers published in the *Path.* There can only be *one* principle, and all the rest are but aspects of it, or *vehicles* for it to work and manifest through. Therefore but the one principle is involved in generation, when it takes to itself six sheaths or vehicles, or shows itself under six aspects. But as it is Theosophic doctrine that this *one* principle—call it Atma—is in essence the Supreme, then its involution in matter is but partial. In order to understand nature and to reach self-consciousness, it is necessary

that the six vehicles be found to work through, and what is meant in some Theosophical books by the statement that each "principle evolves in turn" is that from the beginning of a Manvantara the six material vehicles have to be evolved one after the other in due order and in correspondence with the rest of nature, none lagging behind and none ahead. For instance, at that period in evolution when we might assume that but one vehicle had been fully evolved, then man (so-called) would not be man as we know him. So we see in the *Secret Doctrine* that man, strictly as such, is not spoken of until several races or vehicles had been first fully evolved in due order and proportion.

From these considerations the old Hindu idea that what we see of man is but the inner (or outer) hard core—the material body—and that he, in fact, in his whole nature reaches even to the moon, would seem to gain some support. And I should incline to the opinion that Atma is never incarnated, but overshadows and shines into the being called man whom it has chosen to connect itself with.

Is Kama Loka definitely stated to be a state of suffering merely (therein somewhat analogous to the R.C. Purgatory), characterized solely by dissolution, or a violent wrenching apart of the four higher elements? If this be so, how comes it that after the separation of Kama Rupa and lower Manas from Manas proper the surviving entity carries with it to Devachan the recollection of the earthly personality?

T.E.K.—I ask as above because memory of events, persons, etc., is usually defined as a function of the lower mind or intelligence, and, as such, must therefore be severed in the rupture of the lower and higher Manas. If the higher Manas only garners up the moral and spiritual experiences of each personal life *as a whole*—which is essentially different from a recollection of the acts, events, individuals, loves, etc., of our earth life in detail, how can it be said, as it so often is, that a Devachanee is in perpetual enjoyment of all the *associations* of his past life, meaning thereby intercourse (though, of course, of a subjective kind) with those he loved, his pursuits and the like?

W.Q.J.—I am unable to decide whether T.E.K. infers that suffering in Kama Loka destroys memory, or that the separation of the "principles" takes it away. But if the question turns on "suffering," then I should say that that does not deprive of memory. This leaves

for discussion the other query: How does the surviving entity carry with it into Devachan the recollections of the earthly personality? *The Key to Theosophy* in chap. IX describes the process in general to which the question refers. There it appears that at death the body, life-force, and astral body are lost, and the middle principle (Kama-rupa), together with Manas, Buddhi, and Atma, is in Kama Loka, which is a state or condition and not a place. Then the separation between Kama-rupa and the higher triad begins, after the completion of which Manas-Buddhi-Atma fall into the Devachanic state. Turning to page 92 of the same book, we find in the column "explanatory" that if the Manas naturally gravitates to Buddhi and away from Kama-rupa, the "Ego goes into Devachanic bliss." This gives the process. It cannot be said to be suffering or painful. The only point left, then, is as to memory. T.E.K. rightly says "recollections." Chapter VIII of *The Key* makes this clear. "Memory" is the physical brain-memory; *reminiscence* is the "memory of the soul." Each new brain makes a new physical memory used by Manas in each life, but Manas itself is the seat of memory proper, called by H. P. Blavatsky "reminiscence." It is not meant that Manas takes into Devachan the remembrance of every circumstance in life, but only the efflorescence of its life, the reminiscence of its best hours, leaving the painful and evil portions to the dying brain and to Kama-rupa. If the questioner desires, as a help, an objective illustration of what happens to Manas through the separation from Kama-rupa, this may do: Imagine Manas as attached on its lower side to Kama-rupa just as a photograph may be attached to a glass plate. When dry, the paper can be taken from the plate leaving on it the film of the picture. Thus when Manas is separated, its lower film may be left attached to Kama-rupa, its higher portion going into Devachan. And it is in Higher Manas that real memory is.

As to there being seven earths: to me analogy would suggest that there are not seven earths; rather that our fellow globes are the more ethereal principles of that of which this earth is but its lowest aspect. "As above, so below."

W.Q.J.—I do not understand what sort of analogy the questioner uses, but the point raised is evidently in respect to the statement in the *Secret Doctrine* that as there are seven moons, so there are seven earths and seven principles or divisions in man. The *seven*

earths referred to are not the seven globes of the earth-chain—the only one of which has been called "earth" is this one,—but are the seven principles of this globe, the most gross of which is that seen by us. No other word could be used for these except "earth," since as yet we are not well enough acquainted with them to give them distinct names. Were we to name them we should say (1) earth's physical shell, (2) earth's jiva principle, (5) [3?] earth's linga-sarira or astral body, and so on through the whole seven. This applies equally to all the globes of the earth-chain, and the other six of those cannot be called "earths" and were never intended to be, because they are composed of matter which is not perceptible to our eyes. So, when the questioner says that "there are not seven earths," there is a confounding together of two subjects, for the seven earths referred to are this earth and its principles, whereas the "fellow-globes" are the other globes in our chain and not our earth's higher principles. Each of the globes in the chain is septenary (see *Secret Doctrine,* Vol. I, p. 167, line 28), and hence if we count these globe principles we have seven times seven, equals forty-nine, instead of only seven for the whole, as would follow from the questioner's position.

Five Years of Theosophy *states that there are thirty-six Tatwams. As Shiva Sanhita says, "From ether came air; from ether and air, fire; from ether, air, and fire, water; and from ether, air, fire, and water was produced the earth, all of them forming the Universe." Now, I cannot arrange the combination of these five tatwams so as to make thirty-six. I make five primal tatwams, ten double, ten triple, four quadruple, one quintuple, or thirty in all. Can you supply the deficiency?*

W.Q.J.—It has been generally understood that the study of the tatwas by beginners, including all men of every sort who are still in the world, is discouraged by the Masters of Occultism, since it may lead to abuses. Furthermore, the subject is so mixed up as far as any treatises on it are concerned, that it is well protected from enquiring minds. And as several Hindu writers will differ as to the number of tatwams, none of the writers at the same time being able to use any of them, or tell how to do so, one may be justified in leaving the matter untouched for the present. For my part I am willing to confess ignorance of any more than four of these forces, to wit, those of fire, air, earth, and water, and to assume but slight

knowledge of those. Just here it is well be [to?] read on page 290, *Secret Doctrine,* vol. I, "So there are seven forces in man and in all nature."

Does the termination of the 19th century of the Christian era coincide with any of the great cycles referred to in the Secret Doctrine? *And if so, does not that fact strongly corroborate the actual existence and the divine mission of the man Christ Jesus?*

W.Q.J.—The first part of this question could not be answered to the satisfaction of the questioner, for the reason that the true cycles, their commencement and termination, are not given out by the Adepts, as that is a sacred matter pertaining to high initiations. But I should like to ask the questioner how he can, by any fair logic or argument, take the views of the writer of the *Secret Doctrine* in regard to the subject of cycles—about which she is fully informed and he knows nothing—and then base upon them an argument for the "actual existence and divine mission of the man Christ Jesus." And, as she says that there was no Christ Jesus as a man with a divine mission, no such conclusion as is drawn by the questioner could result from an affirmative answer to the first question.

But suppose we admit that the termination of the 19th century A.D. coincides with some of the great cycles referred to in the *Secret Doctrine,* nothing would be proved respecting the "actual existence and divine mission of the man Christ Jesus," for the reason that there are many other eras, in other nations and religions, running at the present time, and doubtless it would be found that the termination of the century of some of them would more nearly coincide with some of the great eras than the Christian 19th century. In such a case, the founders of those religions or eras would have proof in the coincidence of the cycles,—in case that constitutes any proof at all. There are the Christian era, the Mohammedan era, the Hindu era, the Buddhist era, the Jain era, the Persian era, the Chinese era, and others. Now as some of the centuries in these various eras must coincide with some of the great cycles, it should follow from the questioner's position that there is corroboration for the "actual existence and divine mission" of the various great personages alleged by the various peoples and followers of the several faiths to be appearances of God upon earth, and the ones from whose births their respective eras may be reckoned. However, in

my opinion, all these coincidences prove nothing for any great religion, or any Saviour, in any time or nation.

In what sense is the word "correspond" used in Theosophical writings and the works of Swedenborg? In the sense of "cause and effect," and that things never "correspond" unless this relation exists between them?

W.Q.J. I presume the questioner refers to the use of the words "it corresponds," "there is a correspondence." This does not refer to cause and effect, but rather to similarity or likeness, as: Good *corresponds* to light, and evil to darkness"; "Selfishness *corresponds* to frigidity and iciness, and generosity to heat." There is no relation of cause and effect between these, for generosity is not the effect of heat nor its cause, nor is the light the effect or cause of goodness. You are therefore essentially wrong in supposing the word "correspondence" is used to express cause and effect. An examination of a good dictionary discloses the meaning to be "fitness, agreement, proportion," hence "similarity." The questioner should study this word and obtain a clear understanding of its meaning and use, for if the conception of it remains so confused as the question indicates, many other errors will result. A more or less complete knowledge of *correspondences* gives the power to gain knowledge gradually from one plane to another.

(Questions and answers included in this installment are reprinted from the following issues of the *Theosophical Forum,* in this sequence: April, 1892; August, 1890; December, 1890; March, 1891; April-May, 1890; March, 1890; September, 1890.)

FREEDOM OF THE MODERN MAN

He has become free from the external bonds that would prevent him from doing and thinking as he sees fit. He would be free to act according to his own will, if he knew what he wanted, thought and felt. But he does not know. He conforms to anonymous authorities and adopts a self that is not his. The more he does this, the more powerless he feels, the more he is forced to conform. In spite of a veneer of optimism and initiative, modern man is overcome by a profound feeling of powerlessness which makes him gaze toward approaching catastrophes as though he were paralyzed.

—ERICH FROMM

LIFE AND CONSCIOUSNESS

ALTHOUGH man thinks, he does not know the source of the power to think; and while he desires, he remains ignorant of the seat of his desires. He is acutely aware of the needs of the body, and does what he can to satisfy them. The reality of his body is unmistakable, but he is uncertain as to the existence of the soul and, therefore, gives little thought to what may be its needs.

Yet from ages of a forgotten past he has worshipped gods of his own imagining. Saviours have come and gone, and while they have taught the truth about man's nature, their words have been ignored or misunderstood, so that the varying traditions of spiritual teaching have led to conflicts between the followers of organized religion, and among the various sects, often ending in long wars and crusades. So, as is often said, cycles of darkness follow periods of light, although the light, even though hidden for a time, always remains somewhere in the world. In the present cycle, a new light can be seen shining through the crevices of the decaying thought-structure of the past.

Light is of several kinds, varying as to its source. There is the diminishing light of the eclipse, which causes dismay as it gradually fades into semi-darkness, after which it regains as gradually its full splendor, restoring faith in the great luminary of our cosmos. Or we may think of the light of the dawn which breaks through the mists of night, greeting and stirring the mind with a renewal of energy. But there is also the self-existent light which shines forth as consciousness wherever there are forms of life, differing only in degree. This light gives to man the power to think, to will, and to feel. Consciousness is the presence of spirit, conditioned by matter and its forms. In man, consciousness or spirit gains the sort of symmetrical reflection which makes it progressively aware of itself. Through this capacity of self-consciousness, mind becomes dual, and the ray of mind which is united with the body may assume either the earthy identity of lower manas, or reach toward the transcendent clarity of an egoic awareness. The meditative mind, when reaching up to

spiritual reality, shuts the doors opening on the outer world, making of itself the portal to higher planes.

Life and the life-powers must remain a mystery so long as their source is believed to be the body, for the body is subject to dissolution. The spirit is the source of understanding, for the spirit, in contrast to matter and the body, is eternal. As Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-Gita:* "It is even a portion of myself which, having assumed life in this world of conditioned existence, draweth together the five senses and the mind in order that it may obtain a body and may leave it again." Thus the spirit makes a focus of the lower principles and the life-energy in order to incarnate. To think that the body provides life and existence is to accept only a seeming reality.

How shall this illusion, so common and so easily adopted, be dispelled? The path to true perception, we are told, leads to the identification of self with the divine in man. How is this identification accomplished? Desire, we are taught, must be replaced by aspiration, and wishfulness by renunciation. Self-reliance can leave no room for weak dependence, and distracting passions are turned away by the strength of soul purposes. This is the path of transcendence.

Let us consider the connotation of the word "transcendental." The term is sometimes charged with vagueness, but in Theosophical usage its meaning has clear definition. The reach of transcendental thought is toward the highest plane attainable by the finite mind, a movement of the ego pressed on by that which, lying within, at the very root of the Self, is more than any finite embodiment. The three planes now within our conceptual understanding, according to *The Secret Doctrine,* are (1) the Realistic plane of thought; (2) the Idealistic; and (3) the purely Divine or Spiritual. (*S.D.* II, 335.) The other planes above, making seven in all, are of a subtlety that cannot even be symbolized in terms of ordinary phraseology. These three planes correspond, perhaps, to the Neoplatonic division of knowledge into Opinion, Science, and Illumination. Opinion has to do with appearances, the *seeming* realities of our lives. "Science" in this case would be the metaphysical teachings concerning what lies behind appearances, while Illumination would mean direct confirmation, through soul-perception, of those teachings.

How, then, shall we proceed with our investigations? Turning to another place in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 40), we find it stated: "Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities." It follows, then, that on the terrestrial plane of existence, birth and death may appear to many to be the two indisputable realities of existence. But for the one who seeks to see and to understand events as they are known to the reincarnating ego, there is this counsel: "Thy shadows live and vanish; that which in thee shall live for ever, that which in thee *knows,* for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life: it is the Man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike." So, the one of reflective mind, thinking of the planes on which he can be active, recognizes that the passage from the *Voice* may be heard, first, as an opinion, then as a "taught" doctrine concerning the consciousness of the higher man, and finally, as the very law of his own being. The statement has not changed, but the plane of its perception has changed from opinion to illumination.

As beginners in the art and craft of life, it is fitting for us to return to the first plane to consider our quest for truth. It is difficult, for example, to have a realizing sense of the immensity of our egoic past—of the past of the race, through great cycles of evolution—without gathering evidence that helps us to relate our present life to the forms of existence that have gone before. Our science in some small measure, but above all the vista of past history opened up by *The Secret Doctrine,* brings us a sense of reality about the cycles of racial and psychic development. But to relate what we are now to pre-cosmic periods—this seems beyond our capacity. Instead of "history," timeless metaphysics must now be the tool of our understanding. Metaphysics helps us to grasp how it must have been in that distant age, by reason of the principles of all things. In the statement of the First Fundamental Proposition of the Secret Doctrine, we are told:

> Just as pre-Cosmic Ideation is the root of all individual consciousness, so pre-Cosmic Substance is the substratum of matter in the various grades of its differentiation. Hence it will be apparent that the contrast of these two aspects of the Absolute is essential to the existence of the "Manifested Universe." Apart from Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation could not manifest as individual consciousness, since it is only through a vehicle of matter that consciousness wells up as "I am I,"

> a physical basis being necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity. Again, apart from Cosmic Ideation, Cosmic Substance would remain an empty abstraction, and no emergence of consciousness could ensue.

The fundamentals of metaphysics require reflection and individual application, in study, as a means of recognizing their universal validity. Metaphysics is the science of necessary truth about the nature of things. It deals with the necessity of an impersonal Deity, with the omnipresent rule of law, and with the essential reality of meaning as unfoldment of evolutionary possibility. The foundation of all processes lies in metaphysical laws or propositions. Hence the importance of metaphysics in connection with matters which seem to lie outside of our present experience.

How is illumination to be sought—the equivalent of awareness on the third or divine and purely spiritual plane of being? Some quotation from *Light on the Path* may be helpful here. "The disciple's effort," it is said, "is that of awakening consciousness in this starry part of himself, where his power and divinity lie sleeping." Or again: "Intuitive knowledge is . . . a faculty of the soul; . . . the would-be disciple has to arouse himself to the consciousness of it by a fierce and resolute and indomitable effort of will." Later we find these words: " . . . he finds himself becoming part of what might be roughly described as a layer of human consciousness. He encounters his equals, men of his own self-less character. . . ." These few lines reveal something of the essentials leading to advancement, realization, and attainment. The emphasis is on the importance of consciousness as the focus of the soul's being, so that eventually the "whole consciousness is centered in the divine life, which is expressed symbolically by the term 'The Masters'."

CITIES UNDER CITIES

THE theory that the remains of ancient cities exist under those of the present is not a new one. Dr. Schliemann held it and working upon the clues found in Homer unearthed the buried Troy. Some have held it in respect to London, asserting that St. Paul's stands over the ruins of an old Pagan temple, and Roman ruins have been excavated in different parts of England. In India there is a mass of traditions telling of many modern cities said to stand over ancient ones that lie buried intact many feet below the present level. *Lucifer* for September noticed the "find" of an Amorite fortress sixty feet below the surface, with walls twenty-eight feet thick. It is well known to those who enjoyed intimate conversations with H. P. Blavatsky that she frequently gave more detailed and precise statements about great cities being built on the exact spots where others had stood long ages ago, and also about those over which only villages stand now. And as the constant explorations of the present day—reaching almost to the North Pole—give promise that perhaps soon the prophecies about revelations from mother Earth made by her will be fulfilled, I am emboldened to give the old theory, very likely known to many other students, to account for this building and rebuilding of cities over each other after such intervals that there can be no suspicion of communication between present and past inhabitants.

As man's civilization has traveled around the globe many times, filling now one country and now another with populous places, creating an enormous metropolis here and another there, his influence has been left on nearly every spot upon the earth, and that as well upon lands now beneath the seas as on those above them. If we can imagine the first coming of a population to a place never before inhabited, the old theory asks us to believe that certain classes of elementals—called *devas* generically by the Hindus—are gathered over the place and present pictures of houses, of occupations, of busy life on every hand, and, as it were, beckon to the men to stay and build. These "fairies," as the Irish call them, at

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NOTE.—This article was first printed by Mr. Judge in the *Path*, November, 1892.

last prevail, and habitations are erected until a city springs up. During its occupation the pictures in the astral light are increased and deepened until the day of desertion arrives, when the genii, demons, elementals, or fairies have the store of naturally impressed pictures in the ether to add to their own. These remain during the abandonment of the place, and when man comes that way again the process is repeated. The pictures of buildings and human activity act telepathically upon the new brains, and the first settlers think they have been independent thinkers in selecting a place to remain. So they build again and again. Nature's processes of distributing earth and accumulating it hide from view the traces of old habitations, giving the spot a virgin appearance to the new coming people. And thus not only are cities built in advantageous positions, but also in places less convenient.

Evidence is accessible and plentiful in every country to show that the winds, the trees, birds, and beasts can in time cover over completely, while leaving them intact, the remains of roads and buildings once used and occupied by man. In Central America there are vast masses of ruins among which trees of considerable girth are now growing. In other districts the remains of well-made roads are sometimes found creeping out from tangled underbrush and disappearing under a covering of earth. At Elephanta near Bombay, and in other places in India, the earth has been blown gradually under pillars and gateways, rendering entrance impossible. On the Pacific Coast, in one of the Mexican States, there is old and new San Blas, the one on the hill, deserted and almost covered with trees and *debris* of all sorts which is surely constructing a covering that will ere long be some feet in thickness. So without regard to volcanic eruptions or landslides, which, of course, suddenly and forcibly overlay a city, it is quite possible for Nature, through her slower processes, to add to thickness of earthy covering at any place abandoned by man, and the very best illustration of this is in the coral islands, which rise out of the ocean, to be soon covered with earth and trees.

But, our ancient theory says, no process of a mechanical or physical kind has any power over the pictures impressed in the retentive ether, nor over those classes of elementals which find their natural work in presenting pictures of cities and buildings to the receptive brain of man. If he is materialistic he will recognize these

pictures only subconsciously. But the subconscious impressions will translate themselves into acts just as hypnotized subjects respond to a suggestion they have no memory of. When, however, these elementals encounter a race of men who are psychically developed enough to see not only the pictures, but also those entities which present them, it will then result that a conscious choice will be made, leading to a deliberate selection of one place for building on and the rejection of another.

I present this interesting old theory without proof except such as can be obtained by those few persons who are themselves able to see the devas at work on their own plane.

—Bryan Kinnavan

The Tyranny of Particulars

We ask the method and purpose of the scientist in seeking out a conception of the things around us so much at variance with our usual conception of them. To a certain extent the answer is simple; the scientist looks at the world through a magnifying glass. Under magnification the plank dissolves into atoms; these in turn under higher power of scrutiny dissolve into still smaller electric charges. The original plank is lost; as the saying is, we cannot see the wood for the trees. Magnification gives us the world as we might suppose it to appear to creatures built on a smaller scale than ourselves, capable of appreciating smaller distances, shorter moments of time. Do we really get nearer to the truth of things by changing from the point of view of a man to that of a microbe? Attention has often been called to the insignificance of the human creature in the great universe; he strives for knowledge as an atom battling with immensity. It would be strange indeed if the efforts of science were solely to secure the vantage-point of greater insignificance.

—Arthur S. Eddington

letters • questions • comment

Consciousness, in Theosophical philosophy, is not limited to human awareness. How can the presence of consciousness in nature be understood, and how does it differ from man's consciousness?

H.P.B. discusses the all-pervasiveness of consciousness in her article, "Kosmic Mind." While we might say that consciousness itself just "is," there is a wide range of its manifestations, making possible the degrees of intelligence that are apparent in nature. Man's uniqueness lies in his ability to respond deliberately to the rhythms of the universe, of which his being is an integral part. The development of mind at the human level brings the ability to conceive of the universe as a whole, yet in all its diversity, and to be aware of this capacity of mind. This means that the human mind can be used as a tool to examine itself. The scope of choice that results is virtually limitless. For however limited our actual alternatives may be at a given moment, we can always conceive of the *power* to choose, as enduring a reality as the power to perceive. Being aware of themselves as having this power, men also assume some measure of responsibility for the evolution of all other beings who are affected by its exercise.

To the extent, however, that lower forms of life can be used by man, they must be themselves conscious and intelligent. In "Kosmic Mind," H.P.B. remarks that "official science sees in motion simply a blind, unreasoning force or law; Occultism, tracing motion to its origin, identifies it with the Universal Deity, and calls this eternal ceaseless motion—the 'Great Breath'."

In another article, "The Mind in Nature," she points out that every primitive religion as well as the ancient mysteries was founded on the idea of a universal intelligence which pervades all nature. She says further:

> That which alone stands as an undying and ceaseless evidence and proof of the existence of that One Principle, is the presence of an undeniable design in kosmic mechanism, the birth, growth,

> death and transformation of everything in the universe, from the silent and unreachable stars down to the humble lichen, from man to the invisible lives now called microbes. Hence the universal acceptation of "Thought Divine," the Anima Mundi of all antiquity. This idea of Mahat (the Great) Akasha or Brahma's aura of transformation with the Hindus, of Alaya, "the divine Soul of thought and compassion" of the trans-Himalayan mystics; of Plato's "perpetually reasoning Divinity," is the oldest of all the doctrines now known to, and believed in, by man. Therefore they cannot be said to have originated with Plato, nor with Pythagoras, nor with any of the philosophers within the historical period.

This means that all the complex "motions" which we identify in nature spring from a basic principle which is itself intelligent, since it gives rise to an order which organizes, refines, and integrates the forms of nature into ever more efficient relationships.

This could hardly be the result of haphazard combination or change, however random the process may appear in its effects. Nor does the existence of order as the basic law of the universe imply a rigid predestination, devoid of spontaneity, since intelligence can always create new situations out of the materials produced by past causes. One characteristic of intelligence is that it is never entirely contained by any form it creates. If the fundamental impulse of mind in nature brings birth, growth, dissolution and rebirth, the mind in man seeks to make this process tend ever toward more conscious realizations.

The idea that evolution is accomplished through the interdependence of nature and man is found in Judge's prefatory remarks to the *Yoga Aphorisms* of Patanjali. Speaking of the need for the disciple to learn to identify himself with the consciousness of whatever he desires to know, Mr. Judge explains that this can be done only if the universality of consciousness, in all its variety, is recognized. He says:

> To make it possible to admit all this, it is first required that the existence, use and function of an ethereal medium penetrating everywhere, called Astral light or Akasa by the Hindus, should be admitted. The Universal distribution of this as a fact in nature is metaphysically expressed in the terms "Universal Brotherhood" and "Spiritual Identity." In it, through its aid, and by its use, the qualities and motions of all objects are universally cognizable. It is the surface, so to say, upon which all human actions and all things, thoughts and circumstances are fixed.

WESTERN OCCULTISM

"WE meet our Karma in our daily duties," is a good saying to bear in mind, and in the performance of those duties come our tests.

We should therefore do what we have to do, simply as duties, regardless whether that performance brings us praise or blame. All the energy, then, would be expended in the performance of duties, and there would be nothing left for the personal idea to subsist upon.

Have confidence in the powers you embody; only seek to do your duty; holding to that end, all necessary power will be available.

If aspiration is for all and not for self alone, it reaches up to the Universal finally; if for self, some degree of illumination results finally, but only in degree. The stream of effort cannot rise above its source.

The mind is both the "carrier" and "translator" of both lower and higher self. The attitude determines the quality and kind of action; for one will act according to the attitude of mind firmly held. The great and incalculable value of acting for and as the Supreme is that there is nothing higher in the way of attitude, and this endeavor *must* by its very nature bring about the best results.

Theosophists often speak of "getting rid of the personality," and so far as observed, do not appear to have any clear idea of what they mean. Without personalities there would be no field, no evolution. It is not the personality that is in the way, but the personal idea in regard to it. Instead of crushing out the animal nature, *we must learn to fully understand the animal,* and subordinate it to the spiritual. So long as we know the wiles and lures of the elementary nature we are not in danger of fooling ourselves, however much we may fall under their momentary sway.

To forego and forget personalities, means to regard truth only, by whomsoever presented. So it seems wise that we should not think ill of personalities, and this includes our own. If they are our weakness, by doing our duty, our weakness will finally become our

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NOTE.—From the sayings of Robert Crosbie (reprinted from THEOSOPHY, volume 16).

strength. The Masters do not look at our defects but at our motives and efforts.

Sometimes one gets into the way of doing things perfunctorily; this has been found to result from the mind being on *other* things—things other than the duty at hand. The remedy lies in the redirecting of the mind and concentration upon that which is done. Our daily lives give us the best opportunities for the practice of concentration.

Control is the power of direction. When exercised in one way, this leads to its exercise in other ways, until it covers the whole field of operation.

If in any one thing control is difficult, begin with the purpose of control in mind, and *stop* at the first indication that control is being lost. Everything should be made subservient to the idea of control —if that is the purpose.

A way to control speech is to think of the probable effect of what one is about to say. This ensures deliberation, and the speech carries with it *the force of the intention.* This deliberation takes no appreciable time in practice—a thought towards it, a glance at effects. It is really an attitude of *purposive speech,* wherein all the processes are practically simultaneous.

The Pivotal Powers

If we change our ideas, we change our actions. If we see that Law rules, that this Law is inherent in our highest nature and not outside of us, we shall see that it is the Spirit in us—our very Self —that is the cause and sustainer of all our actions. We must adopt and hold fast to three great ideas: that each human has what are called the "three attributes of the God-head"—the power of creation, the power of preservation as long as that creation seems satisfactory, and the power to destroy that creation and regenerate better ones. All we have to do is to realize our own real nature, see what our defects are, strengthen our virtues, and MOVE ON.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

on the lookout

Themes of Literature

As a teacher of literature who has spent several years working with high school students in Nigeria, Charles R. Larson calls into question the assumption that the themes of Western literature—such as "love" and "death" and "nature"—are universally regarded in the same way and given the same importance. During his stay in Nigeria he found great differences in the way these matters are understood. He describes these differences in an article in the Summer 1973 *American Scholar*. Romantic love and sex, he found, "are not the subjects of African fiction." Explaining, he says:

> This does not mean that Africans do not fall in love with one another. It simply means that they are not preoccupied with romance in the way that our own writers are. Marriage is for procreation, not for love, and, traditionally at least, marriages were arranged. One gets married to have children—the more the better—because children are an assurance that the cycle of life will be continued.

Cultural Cycles

His students were unable to understand the situations in modern novels based on romantic attraction and they found the love scenes in American movies hysterically funny. This absence of romance from African literature is but one of a number of basic differences from Western habits of mind, illustrating, perhaps, the phases of experience through which nations and races pass, from which they gain distinctive lessons under cyclic law. There are, as *The Secret Doctrine* says, large cycles which affect all men equally, but there are also smaller cycles which are national and tribal which run independently of each other. Radical differences in cultural attitudes, we may think, are governed by these smaller cycles, sometimes termed "karmic" cycles. Attitudes which affect human relations may be partially determined by such local cycles.

Another difference noticed by Mr. Larson concerns the idea of the hero:

> The hero concept—the belief in the individual who is different from his fellowmen—is . . . almost totally alien to African life; and, as an extension of this, the hero in contemporary African fiction is for the most part nonexistent. The hero is almost nonexistent in contemporary Western literature, too, but his descendant, the anti-hero, the isolated figure, is very much a force to be reckoned with. This is not true of African fiction, however. Rather, it is the group-felt experience that is all-important: what happens to the village, the clan, the tribe.

Suppression of Individuality?

In other words, neither the theme of individualism nor its breakdown in the type of the anti-hero has a part in African literature. The community is the ideal which concerns the African writer. However, Mr. Larson adds the following:

> I have a strong feeling that there were heroes, or individuals, in traditional African life, but the need for survival reinforced the age-old traditions of group solidarity when African societies became exposed to the West. This exposure may be thought of as a kind of war—two groups of people fighting against each other—which is a collective experience in itself. For this reason I feel that the conflict in African fiction is often that of the "collective consciousness" facing potential destruction by Western life. At stake . . . are the age-old traditions of an African group—one more attempt by the West to make all peoples in the world alike.

This is not an imaginative reconstruction by the author, since it is well known that the emerging individual qualities of talented black people in the United States were often suppressed by the pressure of the black communities, which had learned from experience that the dominant white culture insisted upon treating all black people as the same, and punished signs of individual distinction. It was natural, therefore, that individual identity should take refuge in the anonymous mass of the entire black community. Oppression of a race has the natural effect of suppressing nascent individuality, and Mr. Larson provides one more illustration of this in his account of the defensive tactics of the Africans.

Not Separate from Nature

Of even greater interest, however, is his description of the African's feeling and view of nature:

> The African does not see the natural world around him as something that he is removed from—as we do in the West—but

> as something he is a part of. The piece of wood used for the carving of a mask is sacred because it incorporates the spirit of the ancestors—a part of the chain of life. The African does not think that nature is something he is separate from; for the African there is no ontological gap. He is every bit as much a part of the natural world as his environment is a part of him—and hence, like love, nature is something that is taken for granted.

Moral Relatedness

This recalls a passage in Robert Redfield's book, *The Primitive World and its Transformations:*

> Primitive man is, as I have said, at once in nature and yet acting on it, getting his living, taking from it food and shelter. But as that nature is part of the same moral system in which man and the affairs between men also find themselves, man's actions with regard to nature are limited by notions of inherent, not expediential, righteousness. . . . "All economic activities, such as hunting, gathering fuel, cultivating the land, storing food, assume a relatedness to the encompassing universe." And the relatedness is moral or religious.

Lesson for the West

Modern man, Dr. Redfield points out, emerges from this "primitive" view as a developing individual, with the result that the moral cosmos of his simpler past loses its authority. As he says:

> Man comes out from the unity of the universe within which he is orientated now as something separate from nature and comes to confront nature as something with physical qualities only, upon which he may work his will. As this happens, the universe loses its moral character and becomes to him indifferent. . . .

Without moral character, nature becomes a mere utility, and the exploitation of nature is but the general case of the aggressive colonial policy which overtakes the peoples who still have a close connection with the natural environment. Studies such as that by Mr. Larson may help us to understand what has been lost in the processes of individualization, so characteristic of modern Westerners. A true individualization would consciously increase the strength of the moral links with the whole of nature.

H.P.B. on Social Ills

A model for comment on current affairs was established for Theosophists by H. P. Blavatsky's *Lucifer* editorials. Much more

than in her earlier work in the *Theosophist,* which was primarily expository of the Theosophical philosophy, she used the pages of *Lucifer* for social criticism, dealing with the events of the day. However, while she often wrote in uncompromising terms concerning the abuse of power and the misery of the poor, she also pointed to the need for knowledge of how to overcome social inequities. In "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work," she spoke of the failure of practical or material philanthropy to produce the expected results and called attention to the moral weaknesses of sectarian charity. Again, in "Our Cycle and the Next," H.P.B. selected for notice the pride taken by the British in the sum of 20 million £ which was raised by subscription for charity, remarking that while this gift to the poor seemed a great achievement, it would soon be exhausted, and even this enormous sum would leave without benefit many more than it could help.

Virtues of Small Communities

Far better, she said, than such sudden and dramatic acts of charity is the consideration shown to everyone, from day to day, in small communities "where there are no needy people at all," and where rulers do not wait for a "national calamity" to use some of the nation's surplus wealth in ways that cannot possibly cure the basic ill. At the time H.P.B. was writing for *Lucifer,* the trend to bigness in national power and in industry had hardly begun, by comparison with the dimensions of today's multinational corporations and the might of the superpowers. And only within the past ten or fifteen years have the dangers and abuses of "bigness" become clearly apparent to responsible members of society. But now the multiplying evils of enterprises of monstrous sizes are receiving vigorous criticism. A good example of the humane reasoning of those who warn against the continuing trend to "bigness" in economic operations is found in an address by E. F. Schumacher, a British economist, before an audience of businessmen brought together by the Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute in Switzerland, in September, 1972.

Evils of Giantism

Dr. Schumacher said in part:

> The implications of a technology moving ever more rapidly in the direction of giantism, complexity, and violence are becoming so clear that no great gifts of prophecy are needed to under-

stand where they are taking us. In human terms, giantism leads to frustration all around; it entails a degree of specialization that destroys work satisfaction and produces fragmentary men, too specialized to be wise. In social terms, . . . it means exclusion: an ever increasing proportion of mankind finds itself excluded from the productive process, except in the role of technological gap-fillers, whether on the factory floor or in some vast, "open style" office. In ecological terms, it means damage: the tolerance margins of nature are, it seems, very well adjusted to the "human scale," but—as we can observe only too frequently—they cannot cope with the giantism and violence of supertechnology. In resources terms, it means exhaustion. This, again, is only too obvious. Gigantic industrial concentrations, operating gigantic machines with the primary object of "saving" human labour, have to rely exclusively on highly concentrated resources; this means that naturally concentrated resources—like high grade ores and the best fossil fuels—are used with the greatest profligacy, while the artificial "concentration" of resources further increases the need for high grade fuels.

We might also say that the frustration and exclusion produced by these technological and organizational developments—in the direction of giantism, complexity, and violence—disrupt all traditional life patterns and engender widespread irresponsibility, which may well be the most important causative factors behind the so-called population explosion.

Non-Violent Methods

It is Dr. Schumacher's contention that enterprises which are so large as to be out of scale with human beings acquire a natural tendency to violent consequences. The time has come, in his view, for there to be a deliberate attempt to reform our technology "in the directions of smallness, simplicity, and non-violence." He continues:

Perhaps I should explain precisely what I mean by non-violence. "Doing violence" means to violate, to infringe, to transgress, to disobey. We might say: It means to behave unecologically, without regard to health, beauty and permanence. In this sense, who could doubt that ours is the most violent civilization ever? Striving for non-violence would mean to try and work with the gentle and the incredibly efficient methods of nature instead of bludgeoning nature and forcing one's way through her. Biological processes are normally far less violent than mechanical ones; prevention is non-violent compared with cure; recycling is non-violent compared with so-called disposal. Giantism, of course, is of the very nature of violence; it violates all the laws of harmony and balance. We can also

> say that mass production is violent whereas production by the masses may be non-violent. It can easily be seen that smallness—that is, fitting the human scale—simplicity—that is, fitting the fundamentally simple requirements and interests of man—and non-violence—that is, fitting the *modus operandi* of living nature around us—that these three belong closely together. . . .

Dangers of Ruthless Action

Dr. Schumacher is convinced that the cocksure confidence of modern technical specialists hides a basic ignorance of the larger laws and processes of nature. They are very far from being able to understand the humility of Isaac Newton, who said: "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." With Newton's modesty in mind, Dr. Schumacher concludes:

> There is nothing more dangerous than the ruthless application of fragmentary knowledge, yet ruthlessness is written all over our present-day technology. If we pride ourselves on the progress made in science and technology since the days of Newton, we should be all the more confident that we can design a survival technology which will amplify life instead of leading straight to ecological disaster. The primary criteria of such a technology would be smallness, simplicity, and non-violence.

It may be noted that Dr. Schumacher was a Rhodes scholar in economics and has held high positions as an economist serving the British Government. Today his thinking is essentially Gandhian, as his writings amply demonstrate. Perhaps the most interesting example of his work for students of Theosophy would be the paper, "Buddhist Economics," which appeared in the book, *Sources,* edited by Theodore Roszak, and published by Harper & Row in 1972.

A False Economy?

A magazine writer noted recently that the phrase, "energy-saving," used to sell synthetic products and gadgetry, refers only to the conservation of *human* energy, and we might add that the economy comes only at the level of actual physical handling—in production or use. At the same time, the demands of technology "continue to deplete our natural resources," and they also "impoverish our lives as well as our land, leaving us with idle hours

and wasted skills." The importance of this point is that this kind of "labor-saving" might be denying ourselves tasks which play a natural part in human growth and development. Robert Jay Lifton sees this hidden value of work as one of the most important elements in the rural commune movement. He says in *Harper's* for April:

> Many have ridiculed this movement and have looked upon it as nothing more than a pathetic form of pastoral romanticism, a regression to a discredited myth that is particularly misdirected in our present urban-technological society. There is no doubt that many of these communal efforts *have* been romantically envisioned and poorly planned. Moreover there is pathos and error in the claim, occasionally made, that they are *the* answer to our urban-technological dilemmas. But what is often missed in these exchanges is the psychological significance of reclaiming a relationship to nature as part of a more general psychic renewal. When young Americans create a rural commune in New Mexico or New Hampshire, they approach nature with contemporary sensibilities. They seek to bring nature back into a meaningful cosmology, back into the human imagination. They embrace nature in an experiment with the self. The ramifications of that experiment may yet make their way into the most urban minds.

Worlds within Worlds

An article in the *New York Times* (Jan. 19) points out that numerous analogies exist between the "skin" of the earth and the complex ecology supported by the human skin. The *Times* says:

> Advanced instruments reveal the microscopic landscape of the human body as a strange terrain of clefts, pits, occasional swamps or forests, and vast areas where great moist scales of skin continually dry, curl up and float away. This world is peopled, what is more, with creatures we can't see with the naked eye, which have developed with us through evolution and swarm in vast numbers on our bodies.

Dr. Sidney Selwyn, a dermatologist at Westminster Hospital in London, has found that the colonies of bacteria are unique to each individual, and that some perform antibiotic functions essential to our well-being more effectively than agents introduced artificially. As the *Times* observed: "These findings illustrate that our relationship to our life-companions, the skin bacteria, is one of mutual dependence. They need us. Just as surely, we may need them."

More Analogies

In a story titled "The Skin of the Earth," William Q. Judge provides material for a further expansion of the analogies. He shows that the myriads of such beings are counterparts of still others beyond the reach of the microscope, and that their life course and behavior are profoundly influenced by the thoughts of men. Describing what might be called the inner life of the earth, he says in part:

> As I gazed the surface of the revolving mass was seen to be covered with circling hosts of small creatures whose movements caused the revolutions, and all at once it seemed as if the moving body became transparent, and within was filled with the same creatures. They were constantly coming from the surface and moving to the center along well-defined paths. Here was the whole globe represented in forcible miniature, and these creatures within and upon it of their own nature moved it, guided by some mysterious Being whose presence was only revealed by beams of light. Nor could the others see him, but his silent directions were carried out.

Old Methods in Modern Dress

E. Fuller Torrey, a psychiatrist, writes in the *Los Angeles Times* (Feb. 4) that the practice of psychotherapy is by no means a product of modern times, or of the "civilized" nations. He says:

> The term "witchdoctor" is Western in origin, imposed on healers of the Third World by 18th and 19th century explorers. The world was simpler then, and the newly discovered cultures were quickly assigned their proper status in the Order of Things. We were white, they were black. We were civilized, they were primitive. We were Christian, they were pagan. We used science, they used magic.
>
> We had doctors, they had witchdoctors.
>
> American psychiatrists have much to learn from therapists in other cultures. My own experience observing and working with them includes two years in Ethiopia and briefer periods in Sarawak, Bali, Hong Kong, Colombia, and with Alaskan Indians, Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans in this country.
>
> What I learned from these doctor-healers was that I, as a psychiatrist, was using the same mechanisms for curing my patients as they were—and, not surprisingly, I was getting about the same results.

Qualities of Good Doctors

Dr. Torrey points out further that the qualities which enable a

person to promote a healing process are the same, regardless of labels—and so are the props. For instance, the naming of the ailment is a universal ritual which has a definite function. The naming of a malady, especially by one who is believed to have knowledge, gives it objectivity in the patient's mind—it is thus set apart from himself and can be studied, understood, and treated. Concerning the personal qualifications of healers, Dr. Torrey observes that "accurate empathy, nonpossessive warmth, genuineness," more than the ability to achieve high grades in medical courses, have been recognized by many as most valuable in the practice of medicine. He also remarks that a large part of the healing process has to do with the mutual understanding of symbols by patient and doctor, so that a "shared world-view" between doctor and patient becomes important.

Respect for Ancients

Dr. Torrey's discussion of the practice of the healing art, past and present, represents a fairly recent awakening to the fact that the ancients knew a great deal about both physiology and medicine, even though their ways of speaking of their methods were quite different from ours. He notes the fact that certain drugs, such as Rauwolfia root, introduced into Western psychiatry in the 1950's, were used long ago. Rauwolfia was known in both India and West Africa. Shock therapy, although now much overdone, was used thousands of years ago and was described by Pliny and Aristotle. Gradually, respect for old methods is growing among modern practitioners. Ten years ago the Canadian neurologist, Wilder Penfield, told in *Science* how Western-trained Chinese medical educators gave space in the hospitals of mainland China to traditional acupuncture specialists, in order to study the effectiveness of their treatment of disease. Today America and Europe are welcoming acupuncture practitioners and books on their techniques are being published for the benefit of Western doctors. Developments of this sort may mark the beginning of a general reassessment of the ancient arts and sciences, and of more open-mindedness on the part of present-day physicians. Here, we may say, is a practical expression of one of the purposes of the Theosophical Movement, as broadly defined by Madame Blavatsky in her Preface to *Isis Unveiled,* where she spoke of demanding credit for a spoliated past, a credit too long overdue.